



# Engaging the Communities: What We Heard

**Division Wide Synopsis:** In reviewing the community input, the working committee assessed all raw data to compile suggestions that represent commonly shared, considered options that are in keeping with acceptable educational practices and that allow the Board to plan responsibly within its mandate.

## 1. Program Configurations

- a. Combine Grades
  - i. Maximum of three grade combinations for Core Subjects
  - ii. Review and implement best practices for multi-grade classes
  - iii. Monitor Student Results
  - iv. Higher number of grade combinations for non-core subjects
- b. Explore innovative student groupings
- c. Re-examine ECS programs to meet the needs of our communities and to reduce costs if possible

## 2. Resource-sharing

- a. Video-conferencing
  - i. Skilled/trained teachers
  - ii. Professional development for teachers
  - iii. Support for students who need help
  - iv. Monitoring student results
  - v. Division-wide programming and participation
  - vi. Identify and implement best practices in video conferencing
  - vii. Taping the lessons for future references
  - viii. Balanced programming: Some video conferencing; some face –to-face
  - ix. Adequately resource VC classrooms with effective expressive and receptive technologies
  - x. Identify appropriate class sizes both face-to-face teaching and VC teaching
  - xi. Provide on-site support for student problem solving and learning difficulties
  - xii. Include at-home delivery opportunities of VC courses
  - xiii. Research and implement age-appropriate use of VC

- b. Teacher Expertise through Itinerant (travelling) Teachers
  - i. CTS clusters, music, art, etc.
  - ii. Use community members for specialty course delivery
- c. Special Facilities
  - i. Libraries
  - ii. CTS facilities
- d. Common Timetable
  - i. 4-day week
  - ii. Year-round schooling
- e. Distance Learning
- f. Joint Use Arrangements with Community groups

### **3. Governance and Administration**

- a. VC meetings for Board meetings, principal meetings, community meetings, and for professional development
- b. Streamline central office positions
- c. Amalgamate and regionalize administrative functions
- e. Pod schools to cut school administrative costs

### **4. Boundaries and Facility Utilization**

- a. Review internal attendance boundaries
- b. Amalgamate Morrin and Delia: One is K-6; the other is 7-12
- c. Redistribute school populations to prop up small schools
- d. Amalgamate Hanna Primary and J.C. Charyk
- e. Transfer grades 7-12 from small schools to larger schools
- f. Leave small schools in small communities open

### **5. Staffing**

- a. ERIP
- b. Prioritize teaching positions over support staffing
- c. Review role of educational assistants and develop guidelines
- d. Increase use of volunteers

### **6. Transportation**

- a. Limit busing times
- b. Review the use of busing fees
- c. Minimize deadheading
- d. Explore contract busing
- e. Limit out-of-boundary busing to no-cost busing only

## **7. Innovative Practices**

- a. Academy/niche schools
  - e.g. hockey, golf, rodeo, multi-media, fine arts, environmentalism
- b. Improve sports programs
- c. Improve access to trades and expand CTC course offerings
- d. Provide homeschooling supports
- e. Explore VC revenue opportunities
- f. Foreign student programming
- g. Expand RAP, work experience, green certificate
- h. Provide dual-credit programming for trades
- i. Utilize parent/community volunteers
- j. Utilize technology to access sources of information for learning purposes
- k. Implement learning programs that explore and use green technologies

## **8. Cost-Cutting**

- a. Bulk purchasing
  - i. Photo copiers
  - ii. Paper supplies
  - iii. Cleaning and maintenance supplies
  - iv. Consumables
- b. Ask front line employees for suggestions on ways to cut costs
- c. Retro-fit schools to reduce energy costs
  - e.g. geothermal, solar, wind, rainwater reclamation
- d. Staffing
- e. Cut social events
  - e.g. Staff appreciation Bar-B-Q

- f. Salary cuts
- g. Implement enrolment-driven staffing

## **9. New Revenue Streams**

- a. Implement a supplemental levy
- b. Look into government and foundation grants
- c. Increase school fees
- d. Rent unused school space
- e. Investigate Rural Alberta Development Fund
- f. Utilize reserves on appropriate investments
- g. Invest in foreign student program
- h. Busing fees

## **10. Advocacy**

- a. Advocate for per program funding
- b. Lobby government to recognize unique needs of PLRD
- c. Advocate for power of taxation

The committee recommends that the Board refer this document, the trustee working session planning document, and the school council/Board meeting document to administration to review and develop plans for implementing sustainable division/school structures and education programs and practices that are based on sound organizational principles.

Administration's recommendations are to be presented to the Board with supporting documentation for planning purposes by February 2010.